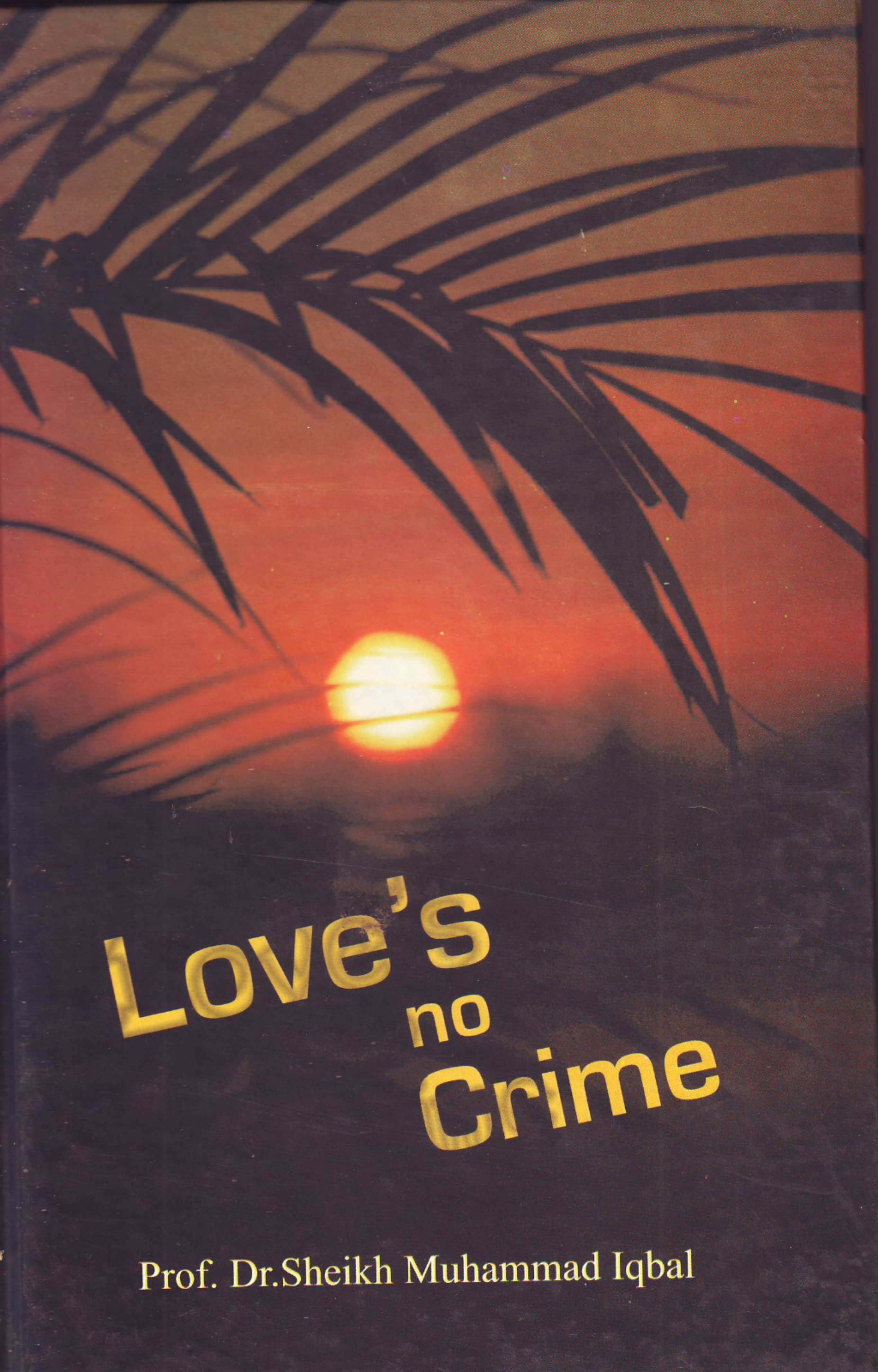




Love's no Crime

Prof. Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal

LOVE'S NO CRIME

**PROF. DR. SHEIKH
MUHAMMAD IQBAL**

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Year of Publication	August 2005.
Copies	500.
Printed by	Meraj Din Printer Lhr.
Price	100.
Composed by	Tahir Waseem.
Address	393/E Joher Town Lahore. 131- Rehmat Park University Road Sargodha. Ph #.048-3221532. Cell #. 0300-4489399.

To,

My Daughter Kokab:
Beauty and Love incarnate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

Publication of a book is really a difficult task, and in my case, it has ever been a more difficult one, but my friends and students have always made it quite easy. In my first ever publication in English, I am highly indebted to so many. I am specially thankful to Tahir Waseem who has always been very helpful to me in publication of many of my books and specially in the present one. I am also obliged to my dear friends Mr. Abdul Basit Sohail and Mr. Shahid Bukhari. My special thanks are for Dr. Naseer-u-Din who has been nice enough to go through the draft of this publication and has given me a pleasant company during my stay in the department of Special Education University of the Punjab Lahore. My son Tabish Iqbal has also made some very useful suggestions in the process of publication. I express my thanks for Syed Naseem-ul-Ghani, who has always been a source of strength for me.

Prof. Dr. Sheikh M. Iqbal

Date: 15, August, 2005.

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DESPERSED MEDITATION

It was on March 15, 2005, that I fondly wished to celebrate my 60th Birthday with the members of my family, my visually impaired friends, the poets and writers of Lahore. Although it was five years back that some of the teachers of Tabish Academy (a private coaching centre established by me) chanced to read my date of birth in one of my publications and arranged a party to celebrate and then somehow or the other my every birthday was taken note of. But this year, I, too, took a special note of it. I do not know why but perhaps I both consciously and unconsciously felt like taking a special note. I was 60 years old, 60 years, which made me what I am and what I could not be. Taking a stock of these years is beyond my powers and I know I do not believe in trying to achieve the unachievable. I may have tried, yes, I have tried in very many cases but in those efforts I was beyond myself and very often, we are below and beyond ourselves. But I think so far as I think in very many cases I have not cried for the moon, but

oh! Very many times the moon attracted me that much that I could hardly resist crying. And that was beyond myself, or one may say below myself. But this beyond and below was, is, and will be myself. Anyway, I may try to recollect what I once began to be. I, as far as I can say, gained some beam of being in a village: Joyia, some 250 km in North West of Lahore. I do not, know, whether village got inhabited in me or not, but what I know is that I began to know something in that village. A small child of three or four years, as I was, I roamed about in the lanes of that habitation. It was not characteristically a village as the fields and farms were somewhere away from the place, I remember to have sojourned there. Yes, I could see things as they appeared to me, but that seeing was no seeing, as it was a small child's seeing. The inward eyes might have seen much and the outward eyes might have communed with the inward eyes, but perhaps they communed very little with my conscious self. But to the extent they communed it is an opulent part of my being.

After a year or so, my father Sheikh Allah Dyia, who from this village had got service in Hazru(a small town in the northern Punjab)

was transferred to Khushab. Khushab was a small town with some of its beauties and attractions. It had very little of the panorama of nature or even if it had, our home conditions did not allow me to be Wordsworth. I, along with my younger brother, Ashfaq mostly remained at home under a very stern fatherly supervision. My father had migrated from Kernal (east Punjab) where, I was born and perhaps the holocaust of partition had embittered him, and he was scared of giving his children liberty of movement. I was admitted in a primary school over there and made a very good start, but very soon, the eyesight began to play foul with my career as a student, and in class two, I began feeling difficulties in use of black board and even in reading books. It was my 8th year that my eyesight was rendered incapable of continuing with my studies in school or even at home.

What a drastic change it was, I could not conjecture, I had to remain confined to my home, what a change it was! If I knew, but I could never know, that I would never see anything, I would have consumed all my sight in storing up the beauties of life, if there were any. Yes, I remember to have been attracted by

the moonlight, which showered its rays on our walls and doors, in our compound and elsewhere. I remember too, to see a beauty of my age, when for a moment I got lost in her charming face which, later on I never remembered, and began to mention while jotting down any autobiographical note over any page. Yes, I do not know how it struck me that my eyesight might be totally lost and I cast an ample eye on the face of my mother: a beautiful motherly face. Of course, I remember to have seen colours, clouds, flowers and a few other things. But this memory is now a very faint memory. I however can recall an unknown fear sometimes overtaking me, which might be a part of the cruel times of migration from Kernal to Lahore, when I was quite small to take note of anything.

Yes, of course it might be eighth year of my being, that I was sure and my family too, that I would see no more. What a hell of experience it was, even for me as I have said earlier to remain within the four walls of the house. Blindness then meant nothingness, a total undoing, a collapse for the people of our acquaintance, everybody came as if to condole the dead man in me. The father of my father

ironically laughed and said: “Allah D yia, you have had the wages of your sins” many others spoke words, which I could hardly follow. We never knew that the blind could read and write, could make living. My father, my mother, my elder sister, each one of them was petrified.

My father like all others was known to only one alternative. He began to send me to a mosque to get religious education, which then was simply confined to memorizing the Holy Quran. What a nightmare it was to be, studying with a Hafiz Sahib! Who repeated a verse of Holy Quran twice or thrice before me, and left me alone to memorize for hours. I cried, “I won’t go to the mosque”. Father took me to a Maddrassa, where the Hafiz Sahib deputed a strong and sturdy young boy to help me memorize. His voice dismayed me, and the voice of Hafiz Sahib almost killed me, and I do not know why I did not die. I returned to my house, started weeping bitterly, my father must also have been weeping, but he never gave expression, he kept quite “I won’t go to any mosque or to any Maddrassa” I said. What might be transpiring in the mind of my father, I could never know but after a year or so, my younger brother Ashfaq also lost his sight. My

father felt that he lost everything. He was broken to pieces. On one night, we heard the sound of the opening of the door. My mother ran towards the door and brought back my father, who was heading towards the river to finish his life. He was lying on the floor. I do not know how did I manage to say: “father if you kill yourself, you are killing each one of us”. My father told me later on and he wrote it in one of his essays that my expression gave him courage to face everything boldly.

Time lingered on and whiff of cold air came in the suffocated atmosphere in the form of a piece of information that there was a school for the blind children at Lahore. What a mighty news it was! a life after death. I do not know why it was for me too. Although, I knew, I would be going far away from my parents, my father was overjoyed, and the only sad face was that of my mother. She could not imagine how I would manage my living under any arrangement whatsoever but my father knew its importance.

It was perhaps in October 1956 that I got admitted in then called Emerson Institute for the Blind Sheranwala Gate Lahore. The institute, I must admit, proved to be a landmark

in my life or rather a beacon light. I took some time to identify it, I who was a bit enthusiastic to be there was now dismayed. I could not make out what to do. Everything appeared to be odd and eccentric, the embossed letters (Braille script) were ridiculous, the laughter and smile of the schoolmates was ironical, the building terrifying, the teachers frightful and the distance between Lahore and Khushab appeared to be evermore widening. 250 kilo meters seemed to be hundreds of kilo meters “what would happen”, “how would life go”, “how would I move about”, “what would be the nights like”. I perhaps was lost in such confused ideas and all around me was laughter, a smile, a joy. I could never know that these mates were blind like me. My encounter with my teachers was a strange experience. They talked with confidence, they had prestige and awesome prestige, and they were blind. I was a new- comer, something like a piece of entertainment for the school boys, some of them cracked jokes at my expense, one I do not know who he was, gave a blow on my head. I began crying, shouting, wrote to my father to come back as early as possible to take me back. He did not turn up and meanwhile I began to be

normal, some boys became my friends, they would help me in everything, and they appreciated me and consoled me. After a few days, everything appeared to be almost normal. The nightmare started changing into a happy dream, I started missing my parents quite scarcely, started forgetting my blindness, boredom isolation and alienation "we are as good as anybody else is" I perhaps started thinking. There was no training in mobility and orientation, no white cane, no other gadgets but my feet gained life, ears began to see.

I forgot the eyes, because none remembered them over there, we had breakfasts, lunches, suppers and everything. The school became a utopia. I felt home sick but for a short while because there were many friends to attend to me. Empowerment started, confidence was enormously restored. All were alike, there was no contrast, nobody ridiculed, and nobody jeered at, there was no indifference, no discrimination, if at all there was I could not assess it.

So this Institution appeared to be my rehabilitation center too. People today talk of Inclusive Education right from the beginning. Europeans and Americans might have

developed mentally and morally that much to make room for Inclusion, but the situation in this part of the world has changed but very little. Therefore, the presence of special schools at least up to primary level is of pivotal importance. In high schools, colleges and universities, it might work provided the basic infrastructure is available which is hardly possible till many years and many more years despite the generosity of the ruling class and good will of the public at large.

Emerson Institute for the blind was really a seat of learning for me, not because that everything went all well, very few things went all well, administration was slack, school system appeared to be functioning on voluntary basis, but there were of course few teachers worthy of being called teachers, capable of inspiring and guiding, Master Nabi Bakhsh, Master Ghulam Hussain, and particularly Syed Baker Ali Shah played a vital role in motivating me to go ahead. Embossed letters of Braille were now for me magical letters, to enable me to read and write.

During the holidays, and even apart from them, I was at Khushab where my father strained his every nerve to push me on, and I

do not know why I developed liking for English and Urdu in particular. The liking for English began to help me, attract the attention of many schoolmates, and I can recall I had in me somewhat, which could win hearts. I cannot assert that it was a thinking mind or a creative soul, but it was something, which gave me edge over others and a fond idea of forming a mechanism of a children's government struck my mind. It might be very funny but it shaped itself and twelve out of twenty five students studying there were ready to receive portfolios from me. We developed a structure, which augured well for my future mode of living.

Our teachers made us believe that we were short of nothing and most of our deprivations were because of the apathy and indifference of the people with sight. In ourselves, we were more talented than they were. Such notions might be wishful thinking, but they were perhaps essential to take us out of the quagmire of frustration and all-out dependence. There was none around us to show pity, to express sorrow over our plight. There were rather people to cheer us up, to laud and admire us and appreciate our efforts. Such an attitude may tend to develop over confidence

and over estimation, which really happened in many cases, but as far as I think, my interaction with the hard facts of life, after these four years, balanced me and enabled me to rationalize the situation.

Emerson Institute undoubtedly, was a typical world, which no doubt sometimes portrayed the scenes of William Golding's "Lord of the Flies", and sometimes it was an island of Prospero, Miranda, and Ferdinand of "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare. Although there was no Miranda, yet there was much, which was Mirandian. This Deserted Island sometimes became Dickens' "underworld" and sometimes it appeared to be like a "Fairyland Forlorn" and sometimes full of Allah Dins with lamps. Sometimes we felt "Tongue in Trees" and doors in walls. There was "God's plenty" over there: ghosts, goblins, saints, jugglers, and magicians.

This first flash of light in my dark-night was life giving opulent and quite rich. The hostel life there, was even more rosy than any thing else. This was in late 50s of the preceding century, when there were no amenities of electric fans, refrigeration or many other aids and gadgets, which now are available or said to

be available in such institutions. But we cared little for the scorching heat, bitter cold, terrible rains and storms. Sometimes we remained awake all the night to celebrate, certain nights are simply to enjoy running, skipping and indulging in various pranks.

Whether all this was up to the mark or not, but it was my first entry into life after my first death in the form of blindness, and this entry made me move in life.

I started reading books in Braille, especially English books and developed the habit of talking in English with one or two of my friends, whether we spoke correct or incorrect English I cannot recall, but what I can recall is that, we talked for hours. I could count on my fingertips the new words, which any book introduced me with. There was a craze for developing the storehouse of words because of my teacher Baker Ali Shah and a few friends. I also developed liking for Urdu poetry. I learnt by heart hundreds of verses of the classical poets and the poet who infused in me the zeal for life was no other than Iqbal. I do not know why I developed a sober view of life and something like self-assessment developed in me.

I would repeat that this experience was a mighty experience, I was lit with many ideas of forging ahead. In 1960, I was fifteen but my father, my teachers and friends very often pointed out, that I was mentally much more mature than my age. Whatever I was, I returned to Khushab but now with the treasure of desires and ambitions to do something worthwhile. My father and many of his pupils were always ready to read to me all sorts of books and somehow I managed to appear in Matriculation examination the very next year, and was placed in first division. This success was a maiden success in my life and sealed my future successes, yet fears and doubts kept assailing because now I was not in a sheltered school, I had to compete with my college friends, but perhaps this challenge further strengthened me. I started taking part in debates, speeches and many other competitions. This college (Government College Joharabad) was my first seat of learning, where I was an only visually impaired person, without any specific gadgets as I have said the challenges strengthen the faith in life, and accelerate its tempo.

In the annual prize distribution, I received six prizes: two for standing first in the

subject of English and History and four for my performance in various extra curricular activities. I also received a prize for being most regular of the students and a merit certificate for getting the highest marks in aggregate. The same story was repeated in second year. I received six first positions in various competitions and a roll of honour.

These two years of Government College Joharabad were highly edifying. Teachers showered all their love on me, class fellows were nice to me and everything went all right after this adventure, which won me name. My family had to shift to Sargodha since Government College Joharabad was an intermediate college.

Government College Sargodha further empowered me, I took up my studies in my Bachelor of Arts with my elective subjects: English Literature and History. I used all my powers of head and heart to fare well and I fared well. I got first division and a good standing in English.

I must admit here, that English language proved to be my guarding Angel, my lifeboat and a great asset. I had to take up history for my studies in MA but somehow I

decided to switch over to Master in English. This was just entering a brave new world. My family had to shift to Faisalabad for this purpose. I got second division in my master in English, stood first in the college and fifth in University of the Punjab. My master in English was nothing less than a magical wand. It gave me magical power to work any wonder in life. Life has been very generous to me. God has been so kind, friends so loving, kith and kin so caring, and students so life giving. But it was perhaps because of my love for literature, and love for life, and love for everything big and small in life. English Literature changed the horizons of my life and along with it, when I took over the studies of Urdu, and had my master in it, colours of life became bolder, deeper than before.

Whether it was English Literature or Urdu literature, it gave me the third birth. I was born for the first time in 1945, reborn in Sheranwala Gate Lahore and had my third birth after my contact with literature. I wonder how even after existing with literature, people do not learn to exist and survive the ravages of time. I sometimes get surprised how people who study sweet things but do not feel them on

their pulses, they talk of love and are void of love. They laud beauty and have no beauty in them, they praise equality and practice injustice.

I have the luck of enticing the goddess of poetry. Four books of poetry and seven books of prose have descended upon me. I have embraced them, they have embraced me. My thirst for knowledge is still desperate, my attaining first class first in M.Phil Iqbaliat and Doctorate on the subject "Impact of British Poets over Iqbal" have rather increased my thirst, and this thirst makes me move, makes me go ahead. The monthly Magazine "Sufaid Chhari" which under my editorship has been receiving publications for the last 14 years bears the stamp of my love for life and things.

Today when I am giving, an account of what life has made me or what I have made of life, a series of pictures and images are haunting my mind. I recall my success in my master in English and then a faint desire to be inducted in to government service. It never over powered me, at least, in the first place, I had the least idea of being inducted in to government service because of the blindness which loomed very large those days and in the

second place, I started entertaining optimism about my successes as a tutor and attracted very many students. Miraculously enough the government of, then West Pakistan was convinced of my potentials, because of the recommendations of the department of education right from the Principal to the Secretary of Education. All this happened magically and that magic was wrought by my academic career. My power of convincing and many well-wishers. It was no doubt a magical act because no blind could even deem of joining any government college. Anyway, whether it was a landmark in my life or not (as I said in my speech on the eve of my voluntary retirement, “had I not joined government service, I might have been better placed”) but it certainly opened portals of expectancy for many blind educated friends. I do not know why, I did not experience any specific sensation during my maiden lecture as I had already demonstrated my potentials for about a month by taking classes in this very college (Government College Sargodha). It was however a matter of happiness for me that just two years after studying in this seat of learning, I was here in the capacity of a lecturer. To

begin with, I was allotted the classes of English Literature because of the apprehension of the administration that a big class might create problem for me. It took them four years to dispel their apprehensions, I was allotted general classes, and to their surprise nothing exceptional happened. Some of the classes consisted of more than hundred students but almost all went well. There were some problems but they were not different from the problems faced by other members of the staff. I used to be mobile in the class moving from one chair to an other chair, from one row, to an other row and was able to identify many of the students by their voices and more-over my deliberate display of over confidence was more than enough to keep the students somewhat disciplined. I had to speak louder than my decent view of life to strike, what may be called, “awe” which perhaps was necessary for these students who, attended the classes for attendance and joined the college simply because of the craze of their uneducated parents. It was one of their whims to send their children to college to augment their prestige and add to their feudal laurels. District Sargodha being an agrarian region had the

boons and the curses of an agrarian society especially of the third world. I had to turn many students out of the class, had even to resort to corporal punishment, which was totally unbecoming of me but I had to be unbecoming because of the pathetic moral fiber of many of the psychologically downtrodden and mentally retarded groups. Where my scholarship failed, my loud voice worked, and my posing to be something more than I really was proved to be an effective weapon. Whenever I found time I made use of all my sincerity, love, insight and fatherliness but all this was less than what was needed to discipline some of the aggressive and untamed minds. I had with me two or three students who monitored the situation but I always remained conscious of the fact that their monitoring might not create any uncalled-for situation and these nice students might not pay through the nose for being with me. The experience of thirty years in Government College Sargodha might take pages on pages, chapters on chapters of books to write on. There were no doubt a few students every year, who really inspired me and inspired life, who were loving, decent and life giving, buds of hope and

flowers of future who really worked wonders and it is because of such students that I never repented to be a teacher, and ever got inspired to give the best I could give. I very many times found the situation unpalatable, but never unmanageable or unbearable. I always, in the relaxed hours tried to be friendly with my students, they would walk with me hand in hand would always be nice to me to help me. If ever I needed, they visited me at home and could ask any question they liked. I remember I always encouraged questions, how-so-ever delicate they were and never shunned anything and while teaching never minded matters and felt shy of explaining life in all its tints and hew. I never avoided answering question regarding love and sex, politics and religion, national and global. Since I was not a partisan, none deemed me as such. There were times when talking of religion was dangerous and there were times when talking of poverty was risky but I always felt that life and religion went together and were integral part of each other.

I always encouraged extra curricular activities, I was incharge of English studies circle and arranged debates discussions and

various competitions and tried to discover talent which was never lacking there.

In 1987, classes for the students of master in English started and that was a new experience in itself. Specially for the members of the staff of this college. Although on my part even before joining the college or rather even before the declaration of my result of master in English. I was, somehow or the other, associated with teaching of master in English. My professor of English Late Mr. M. T. Naz came to me even before the declaration of my result of MA English in 1967 and invited me to join him in the teaching of MA students and that marked the beginning of this phase which one way or the other continued. All my colleagues were sure that I would be in my elements with the post graduate students, but when the classes started and continued, many things appeared as a corollary and something, I do not know what I should call it, unusual happened. Teachers became over punctual and would always like to be with the students. They were their, what may be called, best well-wishers, who in the undergraduate classes would go after “setting the dust”, now began to love the dust. Every teacher considered himself

fittest for teaching the post graduate classes, and with invisible hands tried to push me back to the corner and I who had long been inhabitant of this paradise did not take much note of it. I was expecting to receive highly encouraging response from the girls and boys (as it was co-education there) but there were many other factors, which might be hampering this response. Anyhow, I honestly tried to impart the best I had but perhaps I did not have many things, which my colleagues must be having in the Sargodhian context. Teaching MA might be difficult for the blind who might not be making use of Braille, In my case, I always had my books in Braille, while teaching undergraduates as well as post graduates students. Moreover, I feel and always felt that, doing literature was tantamount to doing something for my personal satisfaction. When I did poetry, drama, or criticism with the students, I felt as if I was adding something to the total sum of my life, my appetite for literature explaining, expanding and illustrating.

I was already the in charge of English Studies Circle, I was here asked to setup an English Literary Circle for these

blooming youth. My imagination played its part in catering to the taste of the students but even there I could not become an ancient mariner, although when sky was clear and atmosphere clean the ancient mariner in me appeared to be working wonders. Eyesight is undoubtedly a great magician, although eyesight is no match to mind, yet mind works in a congenial environment and works for those who to some extent know what is what and who is who or at least wish to know what is what and who is who. Moreover, in our times or perhaps in many times, people bow to what is hovering over their heads, to what they are immediately accountable. That's why people bow more to gods than to a God, and eyesight plays a vital role in playing gods especially where idolatry is in practice. Anyway, when time passes gods also lose lustre and students, when their sky becomes clear are able to discriminate between gold and copper. These observations are not the result of any deprivation on my part. They are a submission of a truth, otherwise my sightlessness has very many times and more than I could desire had upper hand over sight and won me love, respect, honour, beyond my human needs and

expectations. I have felt edified to have seen my times which yet have much in store for me and this victory of sightlessness over sight is indebted to my love for life and love for things, “a love which heaven rejects not”.

In my thirty years career at Government College Sargodha, I have had much of life, much of colours, much of love from my students in particular. My colleagues most of them, could hardly feel like being with me as they were with other colleagues. The one reason may be the result of the collective consciousness which has ever gone into the genes of our fellow beings that it requires a special knack to attend to sightlessness or perhaps an unconscious sense of superiority or perhaps my own tastes and preferences in my behavior and conduct. In my chit chat, I do not know why decorum always intrudes. I make it difficult to attract chaos and confusion. Fair sex also fascinates me but its expression is perhaps always coloured by “honest vulgarity” as it is in Chaucer and Shakespeare. My college being quiet close to my house gave me the chance to get back to my home as early as possible to take up so many other assignments, which came in my way to join my friends under tree

“Tahly Thallay” near cafe-teria, where at the most of the time, to quote Browning, to fit in with my expression.

God was in his heaven and
All was right with the world.

My useful and useless pursuits kept me about my job and I could not be an apple of the eyes of the Principals of the college. I could not save much time to be with them and they did not assign duties other than class work to me with exception of some of the duties in connection with extra curricular activities. Partly because of the whims that I would not be match to with very many duties. Prof. Rafi-Ullah Khan was my first Principal and it was he who had initiated my case for appointment despite the observations of the head of English department then, Prof. Ghulam Jailani Asgher that a blind person as I was, could not be of any use to the institution. Prof. Rafi-Ullah Khan got transferred from the college with the fullest satisfaction with my performance as I was able to have an oracular assurance of it from his remarks in my ACR. Obviously every head of the institution was happy with me and committed his happiness on the paper as well as in the public, but I do not know why my

younger brother who was a lecturer in English despite his best efforts could not join this college for the apprehension even of Prof. Abdul Hameed that it would raise the number of blind members of staff up to two and would be harmful for the students. I won't find fault with these gracious people. It may be a fault of the stars of visually impaired people or even their own stars who dictated them their observations, other-wise they were the people who on paper went all the way to laud my efforts as a college teacher. Government College Sargodha was a seat of learning for the students but perhaps not for the teachers. But despite that I assimilated much of life from there. These thirty years would remain thirty worlds in my little self of man. Government College Sargodha remained very friendly to me no doubt, but friendship always wants more and I wanted more. Perhaps I might not get much because I might have given less, life is a process of giving and receiving.

I deem myself to be a poet an artist. I do not know why but I know one thing because I can take decisions which very few people could take. I took a decision to take retirement in 1997 when eight full years were yet to go to

push me out the next year I had to take over the Chairmanship of English department but this and many other things could not persuade me to rethink. On second of December, I got retired when every friend of mine persuaded me to rethink but thinking is an extra sensory process and in such a situation decisions go their own way.

Government College Sargodha would always remain a great source of strength for me for many reasons. To begin with, it was my seat of learning for two years at BA level, and those two years, I would say amply enriched me. Sweet are the days when one is a student, every thing looks so rosy, so colourful and sweet smelling. Friends are more friendly, teacher are more benign. Teaching is more elevating and enlightening perhaps than in any other period. I was blind but I do not know why it did not appear to be any hurdle. Although one knew nothing of the special services for so-called exceptional students, of which we talk today. My father escorted me to the college to begin with but after a few weeks, I had many friends to come to my help as friends. Anwar Mughal, Shabbir Mirza, Masood-ul-Haq, and many others were there to

be with me on the bicycle, on the road and even on their shoulders if any occasion would be there. Yes I was a good friend too, could talk well and write well, had more friendship with English Literature and English language, and since English was a common friend or one might say “a common enemy” so we were very good friends to deal with it. I was a debater, a speaker and analyst of my own type. Those days blindness was a trifle. I had a circle of friends around me. I had the blessings of my teachers too, and one of my teachers Prof. Mureed Hussain is on record to express that he had to be more mentally alert in light of my inquisitiveness. Then my good position in the class obviously helped me in developing a good posture. Along with my academic sight, I was running an NGO: National Association for the Blind, which further strengthened my confidence. Therefore, I forgot about my blindness or rather I was that much empowered that blindness with all its difficulties became dormant. I was in the prime of my youth and the main melody of youth “love” I do not know why I remained unaffected by it which further enabled me to be on the road.

This was Government College Sargodha

of my studentship but Government College Sargodha of my teaching career was a different one. And it had to be since then the rosy picture of life started presenting many other shades. Class fellows were no doubt also about their work, but perhaps the work was common to a great extent, but now there was no commonness although the colleagues had a work which in nature was not categorically different but self centered attitude or group forming trend based on mostly some expediencies was common and in such a world individual difficulties may loom large and in my case since I think I could not fit myself in any click properly, so I had to be a bit segregated. Nor perhaps could I be the part of institutional politics therefore the situation could not remain quite palatable. No doubt, such an attitude as mine has its benefits too, and I did enjoy those benefits.

The institution like Government College Sargodha was not that way a seat of learning where professors would like to sit and exchange views therefore the persons like me, I think, could not play that much role which could make some room for them, anyway my blindness did not assume any posture even in

these conditions, I had my own escort all the time and some of my students were always there at my beck and call. So everything almost went all right, although even as a teacher I did not find myself in my elements because of the apathy of most of the students towards learning itself and when the learning is subsidiary the learner and the learned also stand nowhere. In the institutions like these, there is always almost one man show, that is the principal's show, and the teaching staff might try to fit in that show, but that may never be an easy job. Anyway consciously and unconsciously this college went a long way to shape myself. Despite everything I could find time in my personal capacity to work for the education and rehabilitation of visually impaired people on voluntary basis. I am thankful to the administration of the college and administration of department of education that it never came in my way. Despite various favours of heaven and earth I could never forget the predicament the blind were in and therefore I worked for them by all means. I organized an NGO: Pakistan Association of the Blind District Sargodha along with my friends and got it registered. The people of Sargodha

and my students played a vital role in helping me achieve my ends. Empowerment should empower others and handsome is that handsome does. Therefore the empowerment which I received and the handsome which some how I felt in me, I tried to share it with those who were facing the difficulties which I had overcome. And it is quite natural to state that only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches. And this pinching I could feel in the feet of those who were in the situation in which I started. I strained every nerve to be of some help to the blind and by now we have a good center at Sargodha and at Lahore for the rehabilitation and education of the blind people and both these centers are source of satisfaction for me. I can say to borrow the words of Othello "I have done some services to the state" and when everything was not right in the state of Denmark I tried to correct it whether I have been able to do something or not, I do not know what I know is that, I have tried at least and all this happened during my service at Government College Sargodha. I also organized a literary body *Bazam-e-Fiker-o-Khyal* and played my role in the world of literature. In the field of Journalism, I could not

achieve anything worth mentioning with exception of the monthly meetings and my active participation in the affairs of Editors' Council Sargodha.

So to say, Government College Sargodha was my life in earnest in many ways at least for me and I would always wish the institution to receive the best attention of the people. It is University now, I wish it to be a renowned institution of the country.

I may go talking and writing for months and years because I may not only have to throw light on what life gave me but what it suggested, explained and conjured. Anyway, I may talk of three geographical entities playing role in my life, Khushab, Sargodha and Lahore. I saw Khushab (235 kilo meters in the North West of Lahore) with instrument of my eyes and sank into darkness just during my stay there. These were early thirteen years of my life which may be termed as a formative period of my life. No doubt this phase of life is highly receptive and formative, and it might be also in my case. A small town as it was also limited to few incidents and no events. What I saw was the panorama of nature and that too on a limited scale. I mostly remained within the four

walls of my house. There were only two important things: studies or the tension which was the result of parental conflicts. I went to the school for some time as a seeing child of class one and two and as an unseeing growing boy of class ten and that too as simply as an external student. Since my father was on the staff of Government High School Khushab, so he took me to the school to study with the students of class ten. Of course, Government College Joherabad was a stir and commotion in the ocean of my life, and my being was linked with some emotional aspects of life. I began liking *lyrics* and *ghazals*. I began feeling my heart beating, yet it was quite under the sway of the daily routine life.

I said I saw Khushab also with my eyes and without them even. I began seeing Sargodha with my heart and gradually the boundaries of heart began to extend and even trespass. Till my master degree the trespass remained with-in normal fringes and during my MA on the query of one of my friends: "have you ever fallen in love" I said "it will be seen after taking master degree" the friend aptly remarked "do you consider it to be a business" I never considered love to be a business

although in my case it assumed various dimensions: alarming as well as charming. My first love was unexpected but natural and which went a long way to culminate into marriage. I had good times but something in me perhaps was unusual and extra ordinary which blessed me as well as damned me. My concept of love was not simply sensual or sensuous, what it was, I would never be able to explain. I tried to explain it to my spouse but she was perhaps awfully simple, awfully mechanical, awfully domestic, which proved to be a great irritant in the ideal of my love. I wanted more, ever more but she possibly was no match to it, and she did not try even. All my dedication, rhetoric resources, imaginations, compromise, reconciliation and friendliness were foiled. But now nothing could be done, on the one hand I wanted to go through as many books as possible. I wanted to wipe the tears of downtrodden sightless people, I wanted to play my role in the field of literature and for all these things and specially in my case the role of life partner had to be pivotal. Sightlessness may sometimes picture a world larger than life, and sometimes it may present a world suffocating and strangling. Sight with its tricks

may cajole others and may fleece charms, beg, borrow, steel or even purchase them but that way sightlessness is at a loss and only looks forward to all happiness, all satisfaction from the spouse. And in my case sightlessness could by no means check the flights of imagination or close the magic casements or stop the desire of fresh air. Situation became perilous, catharsis was provided by the books, by poetry, by literary activities and by the company of the students, male and female both, my spouse who could never imagine my starvations let the situation take an awkward turn. She never relished even these modes of catharsis and created unbearable mess, which has been continuing unhampered but water makes its own way, and while doing so nurtures and nurses many desires, fertilizes even deserts and dry lands. Flowers and fruits grow, beauty sprouts and life has its own way. I was lucky to win the friendship of this water of life, this source of strength otherwise the buds of thought imagination would have been long blighted and I would have been lost in darkness.

Darkness and light move cheek by jowl and sometimes both are inseparably mingled

and this, mingling is reflected in life and life in literature. I think I have been lucky even to be unlucky in many cases, life was hard for me but my teachers, the father and students made it bearable and even attractive but mysterious are the ways of nature. My father who was so nice appeared to be uncompromising after my marriage. He, who had prayed for it, arranged it and celebrated it, began to entertain traditional whims and conventional whimsicalities and these whims assumed such alarming proportions that the mead turned into poison and the springs of my life were filled with gall. Literature came to my assistance and helped me face the situation realistically. I have already mentioned the mead turning in to poison in case of my spouse. Literature has also been coming to my rescue there.

I do not believe in any didactic function of literature, what I believe in is its doses of experience. Brewed in aesthetics and this process makes it an incantation which does not baffle mind rather it befriends mind and soul together. It whispers in ears, the desire to face, to bear, to see, to think, to rethink, to create, to recreate, to compromise and reconcile to go to sleep, to get refreshed. Yes, literature has

been my first and last love so far. I have talked of my first love, and many loves. They have all been the off-spring of the boon, and blessing embodied in literature. The words of love spoken by my maiden love were sweetened, by my studies of life through literature and where there words changed into a gall this source of strength edified me to minimize this gall. So to say, the sweetness and bitterness of love became an integral part of my being through literature. I may be becoming difficult to be understood but I must make it clear that literary world is not a world of escape, it is not sermon, a verbal play. It is a life giving drug, a drug prepared from the precious herbs of life, this drug, these herbs of life, this goblet of wine is the very essence of being and opens ever new portals of possibilities ever new doors of probabilities, ever new windows of inspiration and perseverance.

Books may not be everything but they at least determine the course of action of my life, when I am sad verses console me, when I am dejected poems edify me, when I fall they make me rise, and when I rise they show me the way not pedant like but a beloved-like, mothers like, sisters like and even God like. I

can not explain any more my indebtedness to literature, what I can assert is that, it has made me what I am, what I may be and I may be taken for.

This journey of heart at Sargodha continued till I shifted to Lahore on 2nd of March 2003, I have had the journeys of mind whereas the heart mostly roamed in Sargodha.

It is pertinent to restate that from 1956 to 60, I remained at Lahore so my childhood or early boyhood was suckled in the streets and road of Lahore. When there was not even rikshas, and very few cars at least in or out of Sheranwala Gate. There was no din and noise or rush of traffic. We could move even without sight in Ana kali, Mall road and many other roads. Lahore homely, to be very easy, people had time to stand and stare at the beauty of things. Everything was or appeared to be less costly. One chapatti, one Anna and Dal free, one could buy a lot many things in a rupee, milk sold annas two per ser or what you may call kilo. The fruit, the vegetables, so cheap so fresh, although I did not have to buy many things because I was in a school with a hostel run by the Government, yet if one had to make any purchase, the price was nominal. But when

I got back to Lahore after forty three years, almost forty three centuries appeared to have passed. Men of flesh and blood appeared to be mechanical devices, always in hurry, always worried, talking to one and thinking of another, quarreling with the third, loving the fourth. With exception of very few people, the people of Lahore are totally changed. No doubt they are more educated, more decent, obviously more respecting, but less loving, less warm, less private. Since second of March 2003, I have had many new tastes, seen many hitherto unseen things. When I shifted to Lahore in Township, there were some people resembling the people of 50s and 60s, but on a closer analysis, my concept changed. It is pertinent here to share with my readers a few things. I left Sargodha with zeal and zest to work some wonders, to bring some change in my life and in the life of persons with disabilities. No doubt many individuals and institutions gave me a warm ovation, they held me in extraordinary esteem. They considered me much more enlightened, educated and committed than most of the people of Sargodha. So many schools and academies specially invited me and listen to me, the literary scene of Lahore also made

me share it. No doubt, there were and are literary beings in Lahore, who remained in different towards me and my cause, but mostly the writers, the poets, the journalists, the artists and many others encouraged me. My friend Colonel Masood-ul-Haq who was Registrar in University of the Punjab, desired me to deliver lectures to the students of department of English and Special Education but what he actually could do was to appoint me research officer in the department of special education. To begin with, the department and myself could not be very warm and friendly or I might say very intimate and considerate because the adjectives warm and friendly are my wishful thinking, but later on we began to understand, one another and now have developed a safe understanding the chairman of the department, Dr. Abdul Hameed has always lauded my efforts, and my parts, and has gone to the extent of desiring me to lecture the students of master and even of Ph. D. He has desired me to be active in the research work and in helping the students overcome the difficulties in English language. No doubt, this department has been a rich experience to me. I have had a direct contact with the, would be teachers of

the children with disabilities, and even with the teachers in service. I have been able to go through very important books in the subject. I have had discussions and dialogues with prestigious authorities of the directorate, secretariat, and ministry of Special Education and during a regional conference of inclusive education, my interaction with some foreigners and many specialists of the country has been possible. I have had the opportunity of going through many journals and magazines and at present, I am editing "Journal of Special Education" being published by the department of special education. I have been able to go through many research works of the students of MA and PhD.

This has been a novel experience for me and has provided me fruitful thought and opened many avenues of social work in this sector. Many things have rudely shocked me, many others have depressed me, while many things have strengthened me and given me the confidence of going ahead with the work with reference to the persons with disabilities. In Lahore and else where much is being discussed, highlighted and debated on this subject, some institution and some government

officials appeared to be motivated but the picture as a whole is embarrassing. This embarrassment on my part is not because of the fact that everything is manipulated for personal aggrandizement because there are people who are well interested but they are not well aware and well known to the real situation. Some deem themselves to be experts without any solid foundation, others have attained this posture because of the group of flatterers around them. While some others are sincere but do not have the free hand. Resources are there, intentions are present, but expertise is hardly available. The facilities available in this sector, entice many youngsters and fortune seekers, and they strain their nerve to be inducted in this sector. Much may be observed and pointed out but to begin with, we have only to wait and see and try whatever little we can to play the positive role.

No doubt Lahore has no parallel, and it has the potential of working wonders but my own disposition and mode of living and thinking does not help me to do much. Apart from my acquaintance with the education and training of the Persons with disabilities in the public sector, I have also had some

encouragement in the private sector, specially in establishing a center for the blind people here under an NGO Thinkers' Forum for Social Uplift Lahore, which is now a registered body and I hope would still gain strength and would help me realize my dreams of the education and rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities on a high scale and from here the movement has the potential of becoming a countywide movement. Since I have spent more than fifty years with the visually impaired people and have been able to play some role, I hope that the situation will assume a very encouraging posture I wish that some thing concrete and far-reaching should turn up and I would mobilize all resource to materialize my dreams, yet dreams would continue as there is no end to dreams but sometimes these dreams become nightmares. There are many dimensions of these nightmares in my case. I see things transpiring in this field, people paint very rosy picture of many things. No doubt, we hear now much more about persons with disabilities as I have already pointed out but sometimes many aspects of this move are dismaying. In many cases, the services for these people appear to have been

commercialized and people are making much money from what may now be called a business. There are seminars, symposia, workshops, schools, colleges, institutions, department, ministries and many more things but sometimes it so appears that in all this story the main characters, the heroes, heroines, inner and outers circles are not the persons with disabilities. They are simply talked about, highlighted, discussed, and debated but they are not in the chairs, at the tables, in the classrooms, and in the meeting halls. One may say that all this is the infrastructure but how strange it should be that persons with disabilities should not make a part of this infrastructure. There are persons with disabilities with master's degree and even doctorate's degree, highly experienced, highly seasoned, professional, hundreds of writers, thinkers, artists, social workers, and journalists, they are in every walk of life, why it is so, they should not make a part of the policy making bodies, thinks tanks and the persons at the helm of affairs. This sometimes assumes the dimension of nightmare because I have seen myself that in the department of special education, in various universities the students

of MA, M Ed, M Phil, and PhD would be hardly one or two percent which means that the teaching staff and the administrative staff would be simply consisting of people who are not wearing shoes, which would pinch them. Mostly people from general education and civil services have been inducted into special education, who may have attended a few seminars and workshops and may have undertaken some projects. All this can never qualify them for this serious task and the most disheartening fact is this that they won't pay any attention to what the persons with disabilities keep grumbling over electronic and print media.

The worst aspect of this situation is that the persons with disabilities themselves are not organized. They do not have any united forum, perhaps because of the dreadful paucity of dialogues amongst themselves and partly because of their socio-economic problems. At the present time the fuss about Inclusive education is even more thought provoking for the persons with disabilities because this might sweep away even the shelters they are hiding their heads in and might do away with the straws they are catching while drowning in to

the sea of apathy, negligence and callousness of the society partly deliberate and partly unconscious. As I have said the psyche of a nation takes centuries to change. Fifty years ago the persons with disabilities were considered to be stooges and parasites, good for nothing people and even now practically to a very great extent the same attitude is at work. A person with disability may be a highly productive member of society, yet he is fundamentally disabled. Very few parents would like to marry their sons and daughters with the persons with disabilities. Very few private enterprises would happily accept them as their employees. It was forty five years back that my father remarked "Iqbal remember the people like you would always be played by the society, it would take away the piece of bread lying before you". Later on, he changed his view to a very great extent, yet he remained apprehensive of the situation. When I was studying in third year in the college, my parents made a proposal of my marriage to the parents of my cousin, her mother said "your son is blind how he would be able to appreciate her beauty" and after forty years a few weeks back in a state of self imposed depression my

sister in law remarked “how unlucky my sister has been that her husband has not been able to laud her beauty” despite the fact that our matrimonial relationship was of love yet many a time people have remarked “how great of your wife who has married you” and even my wife who is leading much better socio-economic status as compared to any of her relations appears to be sharing these ideas. Even today people who claim to be specialists and torch bearers to the persons with disabilities practically entertain ideas like these.

As a matter of fact, it's not always deliberate on their part. Centuries old concepts hardly die and would take centuries to dissolve. When my first collection of poetry *Sahil-e-Tishna Lab* was published in 1982, in its launching ceremony the principal of Government College Sargodha Prof. Ghulam Jailani Asgher who enjoyed respect as a great intellectual in sargodha remarked “a blind can not be a poet” although he changed some of his views later on but it was partly to try reconciliation with me and the same worthy professor had quoted or miss quoted Bible when I was in third year and was running an

NGO also “if a blind leads a blind, both will fall in to a ditch” and round about those very years (the 60s) a minister for education while visiting a school for the blind remarked “what would these blind children do after getting education after all” and at this a blind teacher ironically remarked “they would at least become educated beggars sir”.

What do you say my readers of immediate future of persons with disabilities, but no one has any ground to be disappointed in the world of possibilities and that’s why some times my nightmares are transformed in to happy dreams and the thorny road assumes the shape of a royal road.

Sometimes one gets into labyrinths of ideas and even forgets some very important parts of oneself or somehow such forgetfulness may be a part of the unconscious scheme of things.

No doubt I have talked much of myself and my some of very close associates and relations but I have yet to share a few of my experiences with reference to my significant aspects of life. One of which my being the brother of two blind brothers and one blind sister. We four blind persons in a family, one

being my younger brother Ashfaq whose reference I have made already, yet of a still younger brother Javaid Akhter and younger sister Perveen Akhter I have made no mention. It is again a very long story but a happy part of this story is that we as a whole did not exhibit any disappointment or cynicism. We almost remained very happy and very friendly in our early times, later on family politics played havoc but in the early days we showed a complete harmony of mind. We never took this situation for a mishap. Ashfaq remained busy with his studies and hardly bothered about blindness and many other things. Javaid was the most dashing of us all. He never took blindness seriously and laughed at the situation all the time. Ashfaq took his master's degree in English and is now an Associate Professor at Government Ambala Muslim College Sargodha. Javaid did his BA, B Ed and was inducted into government service in the 70s, Perveen took her blindness seriously to a very great extent but her spouse gave her a helping hand and her children provided her all what she wanted as a mother. She has just retired from her teaching profession.

The blindness of four persons in a

family could be a great hurdle but it was miraculously over come. We got married to normal spouses and all of our children were with out any problem of sight.

On my part I think, I remained the luckiest in the given situation, I was blessed with two daughters K ishwer I qbal and K okab Iqbal and one son Tabish Iqbal. Due to some family misunderstandings I had to leave my father's house just after four years of my marriage, sought abode in a flat with my wife and two daughters. How difficult it could be but some-how or the other, everything went all right, my wife despite being not a match with my intellectual and instinctive cravings, has been a good house wife, a person of integrity and highly devoted to the things and objects of the house. She helped me a lot in the bringing up our daughters and our son and I was lucky enough to find in my daughters a desire to understand me, to love me and assist me. As soon as they were able to acquire literacy they helped me day in a and day out in reading out books to me and attending me very tenderly. Kokab appears to have inherited much of me, her liking for poetry and for life men and things helped her to be close to my soul and at

very many things. She has healed many wounds of life by love and tenderness. She is a Lecturer in English at Government College Kot Radha K ishan, where a s my e lder d aughter i s an English teacher at Sargodha. M y s on, my only son, is really my son in many ways. I have seen bad times and felt on pulses how love sometimes changes in to nothingness with reference to my relations with my father. I tried to be on my guards. When Tabish was in class nine or ten, he naturally began to assert himself and I used all my parts of head and heart to channelize it, to avoid any unpalatable situation. This task was the most uphill task but I performed it. I am sure my love might have helped my child to react positively. Things in his case could take serious dimensions. He is now a married man husband of a Doctor and father of two sons, Mechanical Engineer posted at Hattar in Cement Production organization. I feel edified that even in this case my blindness has not been able to put very many hurdles. My daughters are having the conjugal life they deem fit and my son appear also to be gratified with life. Everything does not fall to the lot of everyone, o u r d r e a m s s h o u l d b e b a l a n c e d a n d desires poised and should face the sweet and

bitter of life bravely.

Such dispersed meditations as a preface to the book of a poetry should appear ridiculous but who knows that very often ridicule inspires mighty poetry.

I do not know what I have written down is worth writing or not but one feels like writing as one feels like speaking, hearing, because such a practice may give one some change and change is the only hope to linger on. The world has many heroic deeds to present, I have none to my credit I know despite my best efforts but efforts are also circumscribed by chances and chances are very kind and callous things which have given birth to hundreds of gods and goddesses, heroes and zeros, yet I feel like thinking that perhaps one may to some extent create chances, give birth to chances. Blindness had closed many chances and many efforts on my part and on the part of those who loved me, created some other chances and among them as I have already hinted was my father in my early period of life and some of my friends and students and my own perhaps foolish fond dreams, my frantic flights of imagination my frenzied attachments, my dedications, pledges, intentions and

determinations. I fell many a time and stood up again to fall. Very sweet has been very bitter and this bitter sweat of life is very essence of life, I feel. The road of life for me has been very difficult, the journey very tedious but sometimes there were some trees, I sat under, fell asleep and then some thing broke my dreams, I found the trees missing or perhaps I might be walking while asleep and might have left the trees behind to be overtaken by desert where there was no water, no greenery, no cloud but then perhaps some angel appeared to lead me on to his bower, to his angelic grot to present life water but then perhaps it proved to be a goblet of poison which killed me, but it was not time to die I began living again and during these wanderings perhaps I composed poems, I wrote articles, I tutored pupils and tutors taught me. I met devils, angels, fairies, witches, robbers, saviors. Thanks God I am still alive perhaps to have more dreams to encounter sweet and bitter realities. I cannot predict my future rather I do not want to predict it, let the chances come as they do I will keep trying, I will keep enjoying I will keep crying and flying as well as embracing and caressing the chances and opportunities.

I have learnt to live with blindness, or with the world which has eyes and no eyes. I have never easily submitted and will not easily submit, yet I know to bear and face what can not be cured. I will keep hoping and expecting, keep fearing and flying because this I sometimes think life is, or at least I am thinking, or feel like thinking today on 13th of July 2005 at 393\E Joher Town Lahore.

Prof. Dr. Sheikh
Muhammad Iqbal.

THE PSALM OF LIFE

Let's be up and drink life deep,
 Let's be up and promises keep,
 With beauty, nature, ourselves, God,
 Things all around us admire and laud.
 Invent, discover, seek and find.
 Let's be one, let's be one,
 This quarrelling fighting let us shun,
 Let us share the Sun and Stars,
 Shake the barriers break the bars.
 The Quran, Bible amply declare:
 We should be to others fair;
 Love your neighbours as yourself,
 Love my people they're myself.

LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT

Look at the sky,
 You'll learn to fly.
 Befriend the earth,
 Life's mirth.
 Listen to the heart,
 Listen to the mind,
 Take your time,
 It's no crime.

NEVER COUNT THE COST

Love knows no stopping,
It keeps ever shopping,
It never counts the price,
If there be something nice,
With life blood buys,
For only beauty lives,
For only beauty dies.

PRESENT IS A READY CASH

Darling! pick up what is there,
What morrow brings never care,
Only yours what's now,
On this point there's no row,
Colours, smells and sounds belong,
Only to one who's strong,
Strong in soul, strong in mind,
Strong to feel the beauty's bloom,
Of love's bride, the bride groom,
Life is ever on its wings,
Listen to the song, which it sings.

QUESTION MARK

Why we grumble? Why we shout?
 Why we darling! Each other doubt.
 Why we only meet to part?
 What an end! What a start!
 Why love's stay is so brief?
 Why joy fleeting? Staying grief?
 Why flowers fade and wither away?
 Why thorns over us rule and sway?
 Why love faces so deceiving?
 Why not giving? Only receiving?
 What is what? And why is why?
 Idiot heart! no more cry!

WHAT A MIGHTY DAY!

Whenever I feel you,
 I thereby steal you,
 From home and hearth,
 From daily mirth,
 From lily and rose,
 From lovely shows,
 You become mine,
 And ever shine,
 Nights become days,
 I, my luck praise,

My heart and soul sing,
A lovely spring,
What a lovely time!
What a sweet crime!

WHAT AN ART!

A song I sang,
A bitter song,
A picture I made,
A killing one,
A poem wrote I,
To unwrite me.

A PARADOX

Why flowers do bloom,
When none is there to see,
They vanish away,
When eyes do grow,
To see them what they be.

LIFE'S ANTHEM

Do what heart demands my dear,
 All other thoughts are whim I swear,
 Life is a charming lovely thing,
 Always its attraction sing,
 Paint the pomp of beauty's noon,
 Pen the picture of love's boon,
 Play the flute of eye's wine,
 Sing to the ears a tale benign,
 Fill in life some thrill and shrill,
 Call on dinner Jack an Jill,
 Don't take care what they say,
 Yours is only what's today.

TOMORROW WILL TAKE ITS OWN CARE

Well said boy!
 Life's a toy.
 Let's enjoy.
 Far away fly.
 Well said boy!
 Suck the pleasure,
 In heart's measure.
 Wealth of leisure,
 Is a treasure.
 Suck the pleasure.

A month of May,
Live every day,
In every way.
Dance, sing and play.
A month of May.

BOWER OF BLISS

The beauty blesses boys!
And opens every door,
Of nature's lovely lore,
Of love's melodious strain,
Which removes every pain,
Of leisure's light air,
In every soul's sphere,
Of body's thousand joys,
A hundred million toys.

GOLDEN NIGHT

A beauty dawned upon my youth,
I loved and married there and then;

I wept on my wedding night,
 Wept I and made her weep,
 A love and marriage could be a joke,
 But not the, life-long love.

RETURN OF THE NATIVE

When you have gone,
 My Jill my John!
 I sing sad strains,
 And feel the pains,
 I ponder over life,
 I wonder over life,
 I' m taken a back,
 The white becomes black.
 When you have gone,
 My Jill my John!
 When you come back,
 I nothing lack.
 I sing happy song,
 Right becomes wrong.
 I embrace my life,
 I praise my life.
 When you come back,
 I nothing lack.

A ROAD-SIDE ACCIDENT

I fell in love on a road,
A rise made me fall,
She looked at me,
I looked at her,
That is all, I could see.

HEART: A RELIGION

Don't be dupes, don't be dunces,
Trust not anyone, trust your mind,
Trust your heart, which gives you start,
Trust the taste, trust and smell,
All's well that deem you well.

A RIDDLE

I heard the name of love,
I sought it everywhere.
I fell in love with one,
And courted day and night.
But she was, What she was!

I fell in love with world,
And chased it evermore.
But purpose served it none.
I fell in love with I,
And heard a dreadful cry.

WHAT A SMILE!

I smiled one night,
And that is all,
I weep out left,
I weep out right,
What a poor plight,
A sorrowful sight,
A moments delight,
A deadly spite.

PLAY THE CRICKET

Play the cricket for its sake,
Not for sixes not for fours,
Dropping catches not for duck.

NO THANKS (AN ENGLISH GHAZAL)

I loved the clouds, they vanished away.
 I embraced the stars, they said “nay nay!”
 A flower grew in the bower of my sight,
 A fast wind blew and took it away.
 An eye peeped through the window of my sleep,
 Joy woke me up and finished the ray.
 A hand advanced, a cheek blushed,
 A pleasant joke of a pleasant day.
 If anyone calls me now “my love!”
 I bow my head, “no thanks” I say.

GRIEF’S LUXURY

When I’m alone,
 Then I have grown,
 The seeds of thee and me.
 They grow into plants,
 And become our haunts.
 We come and go,
 To and fro.
 We smile and jeer,
 Sometimes shed tears.
 We pick the flowers,
 Enjoy the showers,
 Move in the bowers,

And do things right and wrong.
We're lost in glee,
My dear thee and me.
When I'm alone,
Then I have grown.

MY LOVE

My sweet sweet love!
My dear dear dove!
All dreams are drear,
All hopes are hollow,
Then why should we follow?
A path which my dear!
Leads us nowhere.
We wonder here and there,
With head and feet, bare,
With eyes wet with tear,
With heart full of sorrow,
Tomorrow and tomorrow.
So let us kiss and part,
A new world start,
And buy a new heart.
My sweet sweet love!
My dear dear dove!

THIS AND THAT

When we were boys,
We played with toys,
We were so happy,
We knew all joys,
But now our joys,
Have made us toys,
We are nowhere,
In this darkling sphere,
We have no part,
We have no share.

ONE-WAY TRAFFIC

I throw my letters,
In the letter- box,
No postman comes,
They keep lying there,
They keep crying there.

TWO IN ONE

I love you not,
I love myself:
You're myself.

A LIFE-WATER CONSIGNING TO DEATH

I was thirsty,
ever-thirsty,
Invoked the sky,
Invoked the earth,
The sky showered,
The earth drank.
I was thirsty,
ever-thirsty,
A glass of water touched my lips,
I poured it in,
It poured me out:
That was all,
A final all.

RIPENESS IS ALL

Let her go, she had to go.

This is life's ebb and flow.
We meet to melt,
We love to leave.
It is but so! It is but so!

LET THE STARS SHINE OVER YOUR FACE

Let the stars shine over your face,
Let the moon shower all her grace,
Let me also join the race,
Let me also make my case.

GO AND SEEK THE BEAUTY OUT

Go and seek the beauty out,
Is she fled to the moon and stars?
Is she hid in the vale of flowers?
Has she taken another birth?
She is prone to ever-new mirth.

VANITY OF VANITIES

What makes you a man?
 I asked him again,
 He only laughed, and went.
 What makes you a man?
 I asked myself,
 I only laughed, and went.

BEAUTY

“What’s beauty?”
 I asked a beauty,
 “Beauty is what you make of it”.

A SUPPLICATION

My love! my care!
 My humble prayer,
 Never love the fair,
 A nightmare,
 All dull and drear,
 One’s left nowhere.

FUTILITY

Unslept all sleep,
 Unwrote all written,
 Undid all done,
 What a mighty fun!
 What a mighty fun!

HEAVEN OF HELL

I have made a heaven of hell,
 "All is well that ends well"
 I can, but none can tell,
 I have learnt myself to spell,
 I have my own colour and smell,
 I have now no cat to bell,
 I stood up, when I fell,
 I have every right to swell.

DO LIKE THE FLOWER

Do like the flower,
 But never love it more,

It dies away,
It flies away,
It leaves you alone,
To shriek and groan,
To languish and extinguish,
It gives an anguish,
What a pitiable plight!
What a sorrowful sight!

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

I was alone,
I chose a friend,
She chose not me,
I lived together,
She lived alone,
I live alone,
She lives together.

NO REGRETS

When I look back,
My heart sinks to see,
I was in love,
In love with a fool,
Who wisely fooled me,
The mind did, tell the tales of woe,

The heart them listened not.
The heart now sinks,
And many times thinks,
What a folly was, it to love.

GOSPEL OF SORROW

I read the book of life,
And wish to unread it,
Its every page of joy,
Is merely a toy,
To play it out of me,
Its every page of pleasure,
Is sorrows' sufferings' treasure:
Its every page of knowledge,
Heart can never acknowledge:
Its every page of love,
Is a hanging sword above,
Its every page of hope,
Is soul's tying rope:
Its every page is pain,
A sorrowful strain.
I read the book of life,
And wish to unread it.

LIFE

The stars are shining sky is clear,
In the darkness, far and near,
The present is pleasant, future bright,
Yet a sad heart, I do bear,
In thy mirror, my picture fades,
In my mirror, I see thee clear,
My soul freezes, blood congeals,
A fire of love, a melting tear.

FATE'S FINGER

I read my book,
I read it again,
I read it again,
'T was a story,
I never wrote.

INNOCENCE

She smiled at me,
I answered back,

The only sin I ever committed.

WHAT A BEAUTY SHE WAS!

I picked up a rose,
I paid through the nose,
My life goes,
In the vale of woes,
I pose,
I suppose.

AN OX

I woke one morn,
Took a paper to write on it,
Hours, months, years passed,
I wrote no word,
The night came,
I fell a sleep,
I fell a sleep.

A LOVER'S DILEMMA

I kept the promise,
She did not,
I was her friend,
She was not.

A CHILD

I was smiling,
Tears trickled down my cheeks,
I toiled again,
I smiled again.

LOVERS' LABOURS LOST

Rush brought together,
Opposite souls,
On lonely ways,
Finished the phase.

A DOOR IN THE WALL

I opened the door, with her name,
 And closed again,
 I liked it more, evermore,
 I lived in it, enjoyed it,
 O! what a world of beauty and wonder,
 I forgot her name, to my shame,
 It remained closed, for years to come,
 For years to come.

THE STREAM OF LIFE

The bird of life flies,
 Never to turn again,
 Those who see it fly,
 Are filled with pain,
 The god of chance smiles,
 At the act insane,
 A new bird comes,
 These fools to entertain.

EVERY FALL IS A CALL

Every fall is a call,
 To make us alert,

Let's face and fight,
 We'll gain the might,
 It'll finish the night,
 And usher in light,
 In the vale of tears,
 In the dale of fears.

WAITING FOR GODOT

Let me wait and shed no tears,
 Let me wait till noon,
 Let me wait till evening friends,
 Let me wait till night,
 She does not turn up, matters not,
 A happy day live I,
 A happy morn, a happy noon,
 A happy happy night,
 Waiting for a love o lovers!
 Is a sheer delight.

THE TIME SPIRIT

"Love", "lover", "beloved"
 Words outworn,
 Use them not,

Hard to explain,
Hard to follow.

EXISTENTIALISM

I'm self born, self grown,
Father, mother,
All my pain,
What is not me is a hell.

A BUDDHIST

Why kill you a sparrow then,
A buffalo, or cow, a goat,
They are me, I protest.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Kill her she's my love,
I'm by her killed,
Tooth for tooth.

NO ANSWER

What? Where? And why?
 My soul's cry
 There's no reply
 How much? How far?
 No moon, no star,
 A life-long war,
 How far my God!
 The deception and fraud,
 No gesture and no nod,
 Now which way to go?
 I move to and fro,
 Very fast, very slow.

DESPAIR

No knock at the door,
 There's nothing in store,
 Now die no more.

A FALLACY

I run and fly,

I toil and try,
 I weep and cry,
 No earth no sky,
 No help no reply,
 A blatant lie.

A BITTER TRUTH

No love no light,
 A useless flight,
 He's sitting on a height,
 What a poor sight!

LOVER'S LUNACY

She loves me not,
 I know full well,
 Yet I daily ring the bell,
 Yet I daily knock the door,
 Yet I daily write a letter,
 Hear I the bell,
 Hear I the knock,
 Read I the letter,
 I love these matters,
 I love these fetters,

My worthy betters.

GOOD OLD DAYS

I asked her clue, from fruits and flowers,
 From the rainbow and the showers,
 From the fays and fairies of the sky,
 From the lily, butterfly,
 From the secret knock at the door,
 From the eye's bitter downpour,
 From the sparrow and dove,
 From the bitter cry of love,
 From the beauty that must die,
 From the youth that must fly,
 I heard a voice from within,
 To fight against the fate is a sin.

COMPLAINT

You may be right, darling mine!
 Why you gave me a hope to live,
 Why you gave me a promise to shine,
 In my dark and dingy cell,
 You promised heaven, gave me hell,
 Pledged the morning gave the night,

Out of sight, out of sight!

You may be right, darling mine!
 Saying's easy doing difficult,
 But who forced you, adopt this cult,
 Love is religion and indeed,
 It is a holy and heavenly seed,
 What to speak, whom to blame!
 What a shame! What a shame!
 You may be right, darling mine!

LET ME LIVE AND LOVE YOU AWHILE

Let me live and love you awhile,
 Let me also learn to smile,
 Let me see, what it's to be,
 How to hear and how to see.

MYSELF?

When I think myself,
 I myself unthink,
 When I want to be,
 My being does get lost,
 When I weep my dear,
 I weep myself then out,

Whenever I do smile,
 I jeer at myself,
 Will ever anyone tell,
 What I am myself.

DULL IS THE SOUL WHICH SINGS NO SONG

Dull is the soul which sings no song,
 Pleasure is right pain is wrong,
 Pleasure is virtue, sorrow sin,
 Win the heart if you can win,
 Win the heart of sorrow-oppressed,
 Win the heart of depressed and suppressed,
 This is the very song of soul,
 This is the destined human goal.

EXPEDIENCY

Fill up the cup with pleasure's wine,
 Time is a mistress thine nor mine,
 Promises dupe us every day,
 Hopes ever with patience play,
 Fears and dangers are joy's end,
 Why should we our ears lend,
 We should delight in what is here,

The moments of joy and pleasure are rare.

A GYPSY

'T was my door,
I knocked at it,
It opened not,
I knocked again,
None was within,
Who locked it then,
I locked it not,
I ever was out,
It locked itself,
I knocked again,
It knocked me down.

SLEEPLESSNESS

I fell a sleep,
Who woke me up?
I 'm awake,
Can sleep no more.

LOVE REWARDED

She knocked at the door,
I took no time,
To let her in,
She drew at me,
And drove me out.

I WISH, I KNEW, NO SCHOOLS, NO BOOKS

I wish, I knew, no schools, no books,
I could enjoy your love your hate,
Your kiss your kick,
Your every trick,
Your foolish talks,
Your heart like rocks,
Your shrieks, your groans,
Your lovely moans,
Your leaving me alone,
To extinguish and languish,
In a life long anguish,
I wish I knew, no schools, no books,
